Summary of 360 degree/ multiple source assessment question.

Recently, several sources have brought up the question of using multiple source assessments for evaluation purposes. In fact, most supervisors already use multiple sources to gather objective data for evaluating employees. UI Operations supervisors spend a great deal of time reviewing client calls, HR supervisors receive feedback from hiring authorities regarding exam administration, the Supervisor of Staff Development gets feedback from students of every class taught, etc. We've circulated some professional articles on the subject and interviewed several managers who have organizational experience doing multiple source assessments. We also composed and distributed a "White Paper" with our initial information. This is a summary of our efforts and recommendation:

1. C.R.S. 24-50-104 (c) (IV) states, "The state personnel director shall encourage state departments and institutions of higher education to implement performance evaluations of employees that are as objective as possible and that, as soon as possible and wherever feasible, include an assessment from multiple sources of each employee's performance. Such sources shall include, where applicable, the employee's self-assessment, the employee's superiors, subordinates, peers, and any other applicable sources of an employee's performance."

2. Cynthia Hier, the Director of Human Resources for the Auraria Campus, relates that using the multiple source assessments was only successful as a management development tool. When it was extended to all levels as an evaluation tool, the necessary professionalism and objectivity was degraded.

3. MaryAnn Whiteside used the "STAR" form (Situation, Task, Action, Result) during the early period of "Colorado Peak Performance." "STAR" forms were intended to be, first of all, a method for giving objective feedback and critique. A small number of people abused the system by bartering for complimentary forms and it was enough to upset the balance needed for objective evaluation.

4. Mike Cullen used multiple source evaluations to a limited extent with his management team in UI Operations but only for personal development information. He does not feel that extending the system to all levels would be a good idea at this time. There are many indications that some in our workforce may not be sufficiently sophisticated to handle them with objectivity.

5. Steve Uretsky tried to use a form of multiple source assessment by circulating evaluation forms for each of his teams. The effort was not completely satisfactory because the response rate was so low. This is one of the reasons that successful multiple source assessments are typically handled by third parties who have the time and ability to track down the various ratings.

6. Ian Christie, a management consultant, former senior Director at Monster.com and founder of BoldCareer.com, a management search and consulting corporation, feels that 360 degree evaluations can give us an accurate picture of our strengths and weaknesses and, as such, can be a useful career development tool. "Done wrong -- or for the wrong reason -- a 360 may cause lasting fear and anxiety among employees and create an atmosphere of distrust in the organization."

It appears that the conditions for multiple source assessments contained in the statute have not been met. In the context of <u>across the board implementation</u>, we still have concerns about objectivity in some areas and, due to the cost and time necessary to complete meaningful assessments, they are not feasible. We feel that Ian Christie's comment could prove prophetic in our case.

While limited use of such techniques for management and professional development should be profitable, we recommend that we do not conduct across the board multiple source assessments in support of Performance Pay System evaluations at this time.